

Herseth Sandlin to EPA and DOE: Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way

Inexcusable Second Delay in Approving E-15 Harming Rural American Economies, Preventing Progress on Energy Independence

Washington, DC, June 24, 2010- After the most recent delay in approving E-15, U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin is calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) to “lead, follow or get out of the way.”

Earlier this week, the EPA and DOE announced another delay in approving a waiver request to allow blending of up to 15 percent ethanol in gasoline. This is the second delay in just over six months, further jeopardizing our nation's move toward energy independence, economic development in rural America, and the development of advanced biofuels as mandated in the Renewable Fuels Standard.

Herseth Sandlin said, “These federal agencies need to lead, follow, or get out of the way. The delay is not just disappointing, it's inexcusable, and it is holding our nation back from meeting the goals of the Renewable Fuels Standard.”

The initial waiver request to allow E-15 was made in March, 2009. In December, 2009, the EPA indicated that based on testing it expected to approve E-15 for use in newer vehicles, but delayed that decision to “mid-year,” leading to this latest delay. EPA indicated that the problem is due to insufficient test results from DOE.

Herseth Sandlin added, “If DOE needed additional resources to speed up the testing, then it should have asked for those resources. Because DOE has not offered compelling or adequate reasons for this second inexcusable delay, I'm forced to wonder whether we aren't seeing the traditional opponents of biofuels – the oil industry and the auto industry - flexing their muscles once again. But whatever the reason for DOE and EPA's inability to keep to the Administration's own timeline, the failure to approve E15 continues to shortchange our nation's demonstrated ability to meet the Renewable Fuels Standard, cut foreign oil imports, foster

economic development in rural states, and help consumers at the pump. “

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